
Environmental Advisory Council
Tuesday, September 27, 2011

The regular meeting of the Environmental Advisory Council was held on the above date for the transaction of general business.

Present –A. Molteni, R. Nieves, H. Rauenzahn, D. Beane

Also present – S. Katzenmoyer, D. Kerzweg

CALL TO ORDER

Harriet Rauenzahn called the meeting to order at 5:40 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jed Holzmacher was present but did not wish to comment.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Mr. Beane, seconded by Mr. Nieves, to approve the June 28, 2011 minutes as written. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Mr. Beane, seconded by Mr. Nieves, to approve the August 23, 2011 minutes as written. Motion carried.

EAC SUMMIT PLANNING

Ms. Rauenzahn stated that the next summit will be held at Canal Street Pub. She stated that Canal Street is handicapped accessible and has off street parking. She suggested that Tom Green, an efficiency expert, present a short program.

Mr. Beane stated that most new school construction is LEED certified. He stated that the Citadel project is certified.

Mr. Nieves stated that the Amanda Stoudt expansion project is also certified.

Ms. Rauenzahn suggested that a representative from Conrad Weiser present a program on what they are doing to have green schools. Mr. Beane agreed and stated that some of their programs may be adaptable to City schools.

Ms. Rauenzahn stated that the summit will be held on October 25 or October 26.

SMART GROWTH ALLIANCE

Mr. Nieves stated that focus is now on the survey which will be distributed to municipalities along Route 422 east. He stated that the surveys will be sent to municipal managers. There is the possibility that a consultant will work to complete the results.

Ms. Rauenzahn questioned if the Alliance was looking at environmental issues. Mr. Nieves stated that they are now focused on Route 422. Ms. Katzenmoyer explained that the Alliance looks at planning and zoning issues. Mr. Beane stated that they also look at sustainability issues.

Ms. Rauenzahn questioned if they are concerned with Route 222 north to Kutztown. Mr. Nieves stated that they are not looking at this area at this time.

MEETINGS WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS

Ms. Rauenzahn stated that no visits have been made.

BCTV

Ms. Rauenzahn stated that Conrad Weiser representatives will be on the October show.

CLIMATE ACTION DAY

Ms. Rauenzahn stated that she did not follow through with plans.

Mr. Kerzweg stated that a new date has been announced. He stated that events will occur in Washington DC on November 6.

Ms. Rauenzahn stated that there is a new website which covers environmental issues – www.climateprogress.org.

Ms. Hoag arrived at this time.

RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP

Ms. Katzenmoyer distributed the label created by Mr. Nieves for his barrel.

Ms. Rauenzahn questioned if the workshop would still be held in spring of 2012. Mr. Beane explained that there are zoning issues which need to be worked out but that he hopes to have the first workshop in spring of 2012. Ms. Hoag stated that there are also issues to be worked out regarding historic districts. She noted the need to work through the process thoroughly to be sure it is done well.

Ms. Hoag explained that most current legislation deals with rain harvesting in dryer, warmer states. She stated that other municipalities have guidelines but no regulations. Mr. Beane suggested that regulations be complete by January.

Ms. Rauenzahn questioned if Ms. O'Brien would conduct the workshop. Mr. Beane stated that she would.

BERNHART PARK UPDATE

Ms. Hoag reported that remediation is complete and restoration is underway. She stated that many areas are still too wet to continue. She stated that additional willow trees were planted to help in areas which are generally marshy. She stated that a split rail fence will be installed along the parking area and that the City will be re-planking the dam bridge.

Ms. Hoag stated that the spillway was installed in the mid 1980's and sustained damage during the flood event. She stated that there are places where erosion can be seen.

Mr. Nieves questioned the removal of debris in the Bernhart Creek near Kutztown Road. Ms. Hoag stated that Muhlenberg Township would be responsible for the removal.

PENDORA PARK

Mr. Molteni stated that the EAC should submit comments to Council about Pendora.

Ms. Katzenmoyer explained that the issue is now being considered by the Zoning Hearing Board on whether to grant a variance to allow the construction in a preservation zone.

Mr. Nieves stated that he appeared before the Zoning Hearing Board as a citizen and not a member of the EAC. He stated that he met with Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitiz about the project. He stated that he is torn on the issue as open

spaces should be protected. He stated that parks should be available for use by all and not a specific target age group. He stated that he supports Olivet but does not feel private entities should be located in City parks.

Mr. Molteni stated that the project removes open space and does not meet the target market as it is a secluded location. He stated that 40 parking spaces are not needed if those using the building are walking.

Mr. Beane commended Mr. Nieves on the way he handled himself at the Zoning Hearing. He stated that the issue is very political and suggested that the EAC as a whole not become involved. He stated that it could cause problems and ramifications for members in the future. He stated that Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz supports the project.

Mr. Nieves stated that he did not get to address all the environmental issues at the hearing due to time constraints. He stated that the project will bring noise and light pollution and will lead to a loss of species.

Mr. Beane stated that many concerned residents spoke on the loss of open space. He stated that the Zoning Hearing Board is aware of the issues and that they should be part of the written record. He stated that the EAC should focus on science and regulations and members act as individuals on this issue.

Mr. Molteni agreed with Mr. Beane.

Ms. Rauenzahn questioned the process. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that if the variance is granted to build in the preservation zone, the project would be submitted to the Planning Commission for consideration. She stated that Council also needs to approve a lease agreement to Olivet for this section of Pendora Park.

Ms. Hoag suggested that individuals appear at the Planning Commission meeting if the variance is granted. She suggested that building materials be used which will make the project green.

Mr. Beane stated that he thinks that Olivet would support a green building.

Ms. Rauenzahn stated that Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz and Ms. Reed have stated that building will be green but not LEED certified.

STORMWATER ISSUES

Ms. Hoag stated that permitting issues continue. She stated that the City is applying for extensions while permitting requirements are finalized. She stated that Reading is working with the Stormwater Coalition. Municipalities which contain the Wyomissing Creek are working together on sampling and level issues. She stated that DEP/EPA is working with old data and they hope to reassess and update the data. She stated that a grant was awarded but was not funded but the group is moving forward. She stated that she is encouraged by the progress and the municipalities containing the Schuylkill River will also begin working together.

Ms. Hoag stated that the stormwater utility fee is moving forward. She stated that an educational component is included in the work – the educational component will include trash in catch basins. She stated that the utility will include costs for capital needs and operational expenses. She stated that treatment here is source water elsewhere.

Mr. Molteni questioned the warnings painted on some catch basins. Ms. Hoag stated that some catch basins have been painted but the method is inconsistent.

Mr. Nieves supported painting the catch basins.

SOLID WASTE

Mr. Kerzweg questioned if the EAC knew about the new proposal to buy blue trash bags at City Hall which can be placed at the curb on pick up day and removed. Ms. Hoag expressed the belief that this would assist in cleaning up after illegal dumping.

Mr. Kerzweg stated that the City will be collecting recycling beginning in January. Ms. Hoag stated that the truck purchases are moving forward.

Mr. Molteni noted the need for a drop off location for electronic and other items not collected by haulers. Ms. Hoag suggested that City residents participate in County special collections.

FLOODPLAIN ORDINANCE

Ms. Hoag stated that timelines have been adjusted. She stated that the City's update is being reviewed by the State Department of Community and Economic Development. She stated that the information was submitted in April but that no

comments have been received to date. She stated that the City has received word that FEMA will assist with the cost of flood insurance to some City residents. She explained that maps are being digitized to enhance their quality and clarity.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Council will be held on Tuesday, October 25 at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by
Shelly Katzenmoyer
Deputy City Clerk